

S A M S O N.

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O R A T O R I O.

As it is Perform'd at the

THEATRE-ROYAL *in* Covent-Garden.

Alter'd and adapted to the Stage from the SAMSON
AGONISTES of *John Milton.*

Set to Musick by GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. and R. TONSON in the *Strand.*

MDCC XLIII.

[Price One Shilling.]

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F R E D R I C K

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TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

FREDERICK
PRINCE of WALES.

The following

O R A T O R I O

Is with all Humility Dedicated

By His ROYAL HIGHNESS's

most devoted,

most dutiful, and

most obedient

humble Servant,

NEWBURGH HAMILTON.

To His Royal Highness

ERFORD

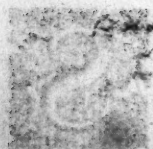
PRINCE OF WALES

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The following

PRINCE OF WALES

Is with all Humility Dedicated

EVERAL PARTS of which having been
brought on the stage with success



his Majesty and Ministers, with of Opinion, that

nothing of that Divine Piece, was to appear in the Theatre

and great Property of the Theatre, and the 2nd

Act of the 1st Part, which was divided by

him into Acts or Scenes, not being in the

Principle of the Stage, and given to the

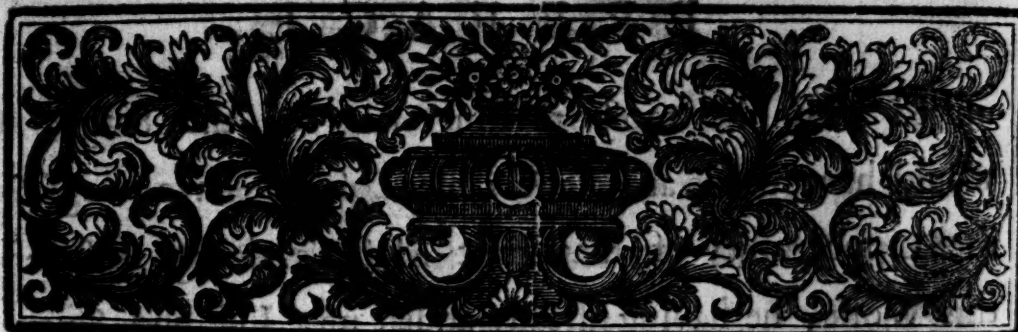
Tragedy with Choice, and the manner of the

But as Mr. H. has in his

as well as the

in which the

IN THEATRE



THE

PREFACE.

SEVERAL Pieces of *Milton* having been lately brought on the Stage with Success, particularly his *Penseroso* and *Allegro*, I was of Opinion that nothing of that Divine Poet's wou'd appear in the Theatre with greater Propriety or Applause than his *SAMSON AGONISTES*. That Poem indeed never was divided by him into Acts or Scenes, nor design'd (as he hints in his Preface) for the Stage; but given only as the Plan of a Tragedy with Chorus's, after the manner of the Ancients. But as Mr. *Handel* had so happily introduc'd here *Oratorios*, a musical Drama, whose Subject must be Scriptural, and in which the Solemnity of Church-Musick is agreeably united

P R E F A C E.

united with the most pleasing *Airs* of the Stage: It would have been an irretrievable Loss to have neglected the Opportunity of that great Master's doing Justice to this Work; he having already added new Life and Spirit to some of the finest Things in the *English* Language, particularly that inimitable Ode of *Dryden's*, which no Age nor Nation ever excell'd.

As we have so great a Genius amongst us, it is a pity that so many mean Artifices have been lately us'd to blast all his Endeavours, and in him ruin the ART itself; but he has the Satisfaction of being encourag'd by all true Lovers and real Judges of Musick; in a more especial manner by that Illustrious Person, whose high Rank only serves to make his Knowledge in all Arts and Sciences as conspicuous as his Power and Inclination to patronize them.

In adapting this POEM to the Stage, the Recitative is taken almost wholly from *Milton*, making use only of those Parts in his long Work most necessary to preserve the Spirit of the Subject, and justly connect it. In the *Airs* and Chorus's which I was oblig'd to add, I have interspers'd several Lines, Words, and Expressions borrowed from some of his smaller Poems, to make the whole as much of a piece as possible: Tho' I reduc'd

the

PREFACE

the Original to so short an Entertainment, yet being thought too long for the proper Time of a Representation, some Recitative must be left out in the Performance, but printed in its Place, and mark'd to distinguish it.



Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

ISRAELITES.

SAMSON.

MANOA, Father to Samson.

MICAH, Friend to Samson.

An Israelite Officer.

Chorus of Israelites.

PHILISTINES.

DALILA, Wife of Samson.

HARAPHA, a Giant.

Chorus of Philistine Women, and Priests of Dagon.

SCENE, Before the Prison in Gaza.



SAMSON.



S A M S O N.

A N

ORATORIO:

ACT I. SCENE I.

SAMSON *blind, and in Chains. Chorus of the Priests of
Dagon celebrating his Festival.*

SAMSON.

THIS Day, a solemn Feast to Dagon held
Relieves me from my Task of servile Toil;
Unwillingly their Superstition yields
This Rest! To breathe Heav'n's Air fresh blowing,
pure and sweet.

Chorus of the Priests of Dagon.

*Awake the Trumpet's lofty Sound;
The joyful sacred Festival comes round,
When Dagon, King of all the Earth, is crown'd.*

A I R.

*To Men of Gaza, hither bring
The merry Pipe and pleasing String,
The solemn Hymn and chearful Song;
Be Dagon prais'd by ev'ry Tongue.*

[Chorus repeated.]

B

A I R.

A I R.

*Loud as the Thunder's awful Voice,
In Notes of Triumph, Notes of Praise,
So high great Dagon's Name we'll raise,
That Heav'n and Earth may hear how we rejoice.*

A I R.

*Then free from Sorrow, free from Thrall,
All blith and gay,
With Sports and Play
We'll celebrate his Festival.*

[Chorus repeated.]

*Samson. Why by an Angel was my Birth foretold,
As in a fiery Column ascending
From off the Altar, in my Parents' Sight?
Why was my Nurture order'd and prescrib'd
As of a Person separate to God?
If I must die, betray'd and captiv'd thus,
The Scorn and Gaze of Foes!—O cruel Thought!
My Griefs find no Redress; they inward prey,
Like gangreen'd Wounds, immedicable grown.*

A I R.

*Samson. Torments, alas! are not confin'd
To Heart, or Head, or Breast;
But will a secret Passage find
Into the very inmost Mind,
With Pains intense oppress,
That rob the Soul itself of Rest.*

SCENE

S A M S O N.

3

S C E N E II.

SAMSON, MICAH, and Chorus of Israelites.

Micah. [*Apart.*] O change beyond Report, Thought, or Belief!

See how he lies with languish'd Head, unpropp'd!
Abandon'd! past all Hope! Can this be he?
Heroick *Samson*? whom no Strength of Man,
Nor Fury of the fiercest Beast cou'd quell?
Who tore the Lion, as the Lion tears the Kid;
Ran weaponless on Armies clad in Iron,
Useless the temper'd Steel, or Coat of Mail.

A I R.

Micah. O *Mirrour of our fickle State!*
In Birth, in Strength, in Deeds how great!
From highest Glory fall'n so low,
Sunk in the deep Abyss of Woe.

Samson. [*Apart.*] Whom have I to complain of but myself,
Who Heav'n's great Trust cou'd not in Silence keep,
But weakly to a Woman must reveal it?
O glorious Strength! O Impotence of Mind!
But without Wisdom what does Strength avail?
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall.
God (when he gave it) hung it in my Hair,
To shew how slight the Gift.-----But, Peace, my Soul,
Strength was my Bane, the Source of all my Woes,
Each told apart wou'd ask a Life to wail.

Micah. [*To Samson.*] Matchless in Might! once *Isr'el's*
Glory, now her Grief;
We come, thy Friends well known, to visit thee.
If Words have Charms to swage thy troubled Mind,
We'll pour their Balm into its fester'd Wounds.

S A M S O N.

Samson. Welcome, my Friends, Experience teaches now
How counterfeit the Coin of Friendship is,
That's only in the Superfcription shewn.
In the warm Sun-shine of our prosp'rous Days
Friends swarm; but in the Winter of Adversity
Draw in their Heads; tho' sought, not to be found.

Micah. Which shall we first bewail, thy Bondage, or lost
Sight?

- " Prison within Prison! Inseparably dark!
- " Thou art become the Dungeon of thyself!
- " For ever now shut up with gloomy Night,
- " Since inward Light puts forth no visual Beam.

Samson. O Loss of Sight! of thee I most complain;
O worse than Beggary, Old Age, or Chains!
My very Soul in real Darkness dwells!

- " Light, the prime Work of God, to me's extinct,
- " And all her Objects of Delight annull'd,
- " Which might have sooth'd my Grievs; the vilest Worm
- " Excels me now; it creeps, but then it sees.
- " Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half:
- " Myself my Sepulchre, a moving Grave;
- " Alive, yet bury'd, amidst all Ills of Life,
- " Life in Captivity with inhuman Foes.

A I R.

Samson. Total Eclipse! no Sun, no Moon!

All dark amidst the Blaze of Noon!

O glorious Light! No cheering Ray

To glad my Eyes with welcome Day:

Why thus depriv'd thy prime Decree,

Sun, Moon, and Stars are dark to me.

Micah. Since Light so necessary is to Life,
That in the Soul 'tis almost Life itself,

Why

Why to the tender Eye is Sight confin'd?
 So obvious, and so easy to be quench'd;
 Why not, as Feeling, thro' all Parts diffus'd,
 That we might look at will thro' ev'ry Pore?

C H O R U S.

*O first created Beam! and thou great Word!
 Let there be Light! and Light was over all,
 One heav'nly Blaze shone round this earthly Ball.
 To thy dark Servant Life by Light afford.*

Samson. You see, my Friends, how Woes inclose me round;
 But, had I Sight, how cou'd I heave my Head
 For Shame? Thus for a Word, or Tear, divulge
 To a false Woman God's most secret Gift,
 And then be sung, or proverb'd for a Fool.

Micah. The wisest Men have err'd, and been deceiv'd
 By Female Arts. Deject not then thyself,
 Who hast of Grievs a Load. Yet Men will ask,
 Why did not *Samson* rather wed at home?
 In his own Tribe are fairer, or as fair.

Samson. O that I had! Alas, fond Wish! too late.
 That specious Monster! *Dalilah!* my Snare!
 Myself the Cause, who vanquish'd by her Tears,
 Gave up my Fort of Silence to a Woman.

Micah. Here comes my reverend Sire, old *Manoa*,
 With careful Steps, and Locks as white as Down.

Samson. Alas! another Grief that Name awakes.

S C E N E III.

SAMSON, MICAH, MANOA, and the Chorus of
 Israelites.

Manoa. Brethren, and Men of *Dan*, say, where's my Son?

Samson,

Samson, fond *Isr'el's* Boast? inform my Age.

Micah. As signal now in low dejected State,
As in the height of Pow'r: See where he lies.

Manoa. O miserable Change! Is this the Man
Renown'd afar, the Dread of *Isr'el's* Foes?
Who with an Angel's Strength their Armies duell'd,
Himself an Army; now unequal Match
To guard his Breast against the Coward's Spear.

Micah. O ever-failing Trust in mortal Strength!
And O what not deceivable and vain in Man!

A I R.

Mic. God of our Fathers, what is Man,
So proud, so vain, so great in Story?
His Fame, a Blast; his Life, a Span;
A Bubble at the height of Glory:
Oft' he that's most exalted high,
Unseemly falls in Human Eye.

Manoa. The Good we wish for, often proves our Bane;
I pray'd for Children, and I gain'd a Son,
And such a Son, as all Men hail'd me happy;
But who'd be now a Father in my Stead?
The Blessing drew a Scorpion's Tail behind.
This Plant (select and sacred for a while,
The Miracle of all!) was in one Hour
Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
His Foes Derision, Captive, poor and blind.

A I R.

Manoa. Thy glorious Deeds inspir'd my Tongue,
Whilst Airs of Joy from thence did flow;
To Sorrow now I tune my Song.
And set my Harp to Notes of Woe.

" The

" *The warlike Cornet spoke aloud*
 " *Your Triumphs to the shouting Crowd;*
 " *Now solemn Musick plays its Part,*
 " *And shews the Anguish of my Heart.*

Samson. Justly these Evils have befalln thy Son;
 Sole Author I, sole Cause, who have profan'd
 The Mysteries of God; by me betray'd
 To faithless Parlies, feminine Assaults:
 To the false Fair I yielded all my Heart,
 So far Effeminacy held me yok'd
 Her Slave. O foul Indignity! O Blot
 To Honour and to Arms!

Manoa. Worse yet remains;
 This Day they celebrate with Pumps and Sports,
 And sacrifice to *Dagon*, Idol God!
 Who gave thee Bound and Blind into their Hands;
 Thus is he magnify'd; the Living God
 Blasphem'd, and scorn'd by that idolatrous Rout.

Samson. This have I done, this Pomp, this Honour brought
 To Idol *Dagon*; but to *Isr'el* Shame,
 And our true God Disgrace. My Grievs for this,
 Forbid mine Eye to close, or Thoughts to rest:
 But now the Strife shall end; me overthrown,
Dagon presumes to enter Lists with God;
 Who, thus provok'd, will not connive, but rouse
 His Fury soon, and his great Name assert.
Dagon shall stoop, ere long be quite despoil'd
 Of all those boasted Trophies won on me.

A I R.

Samson. *Why does the God of Isr'el sleep?*

Arise with dreadful Sound,

And Clouds encompass'd round,

Then shall the Heathen hear thy Thunder deep.

The

*The Tempest of thy Wrath now raise,
In Whirlwind them pursue,
Full fraught with Vengeance due,
'Till Shame and Trouble all thy Foes shall seize.*

Micah. There lies our Hope; true Prophet may'st thou be,
That God may vindicate his glorious Name;
Nor let us doubt whether God is Lord, or Dragon.

C H O R U S.

*Then shall they know, that He whose Name
Jehovah is alone,
O'er all the Earth but one,
Was ever the most High, and still the same.*

Manoa. For thee, my dearest Son, must thou mean while
Lie thus neglected, in this loathsome Plight?

Samson. It shou'd be so, to expiate my Crime,
If possible: Shameful Garrulity!
Had I reveal'd the Secret of a Friend,
Most heinous that: But impiously to blab
God's Counsel --- is a Sin without a Name.

Manoa. Be for thy Fault contrite: But, O my Son,
To high Disposal leave the Forfeit due;
God may relent, and quit thee all his Debt;
Reject not then the offer'd Means of Life;
Already have I treated with some Lords
To ransom thee: Revenge is sated now,
To see thee thus, who cannot harm them more.

Samson. Why shou'd I live? "In youthful Courage once,
" And Deeds of Strength, all Mortals I excell'd;
" Dreaded I walk'd o'er hostile Ground, fearless myself,
" 'Till, swoln with Pride, I fell into the Pit
" Of fair, fallacious Looks; now sham'd and quell'd,
" In what can I be useful to my Friends?

" But

" But loiter idly on the household Hearth,
 " A burd'nous Drone, to Visitants a Gaze,
 " 'Till Length of Years, and sedentary Numbness,
 " Shall craze my Limbs, vain Monuments of Strength!
Manoa. " Better at home lie bed-rid, unemploy'd,
 " Than with thy Strength serve them thou shou'dst annoy;
 " God may enlighten yet thy darken'd Eyes,
 " Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast.

Samson. Soon shall these Orbs to double Darkness yield,
 My genial Spirits droop, my Hopes are flat;
 Nature in me seems weary of herself;
 My Race of Glory run, and Race of Shame;
 Death invocated oft' shall end my Pains,
 And lay me gently down with them that rest.

Micah. Then long Eternity shall greet your Bliss;
 No more of earthly Joys, so false and vain!

A I R.

Micah. Joys that are pure, sincerely good,
 Shall then o'ertake you as a Flood:
 Where Truth and Peace do ever shine,
 With Love that's perfectly divine.

C H O R U S.

Then round about the starry Throne
 Of Him who ever rules alone,
 Your heav'nly-guided Soul shall climb;
 Of all this earthy Grossness quit,
 With Glory crown'd for ever sit,
 And triumph over Death, and Thee, O Time.



A C T II. S C E N E I.

SAMSON, MICAH, MANOA, and the Chorus
of Israelites.

MANOA.

DESP AIR not thus; you once were God's Delight;
His destin'd from the Womb; by him led on
To Deeds above the Nerve of mortal Arm;
Under his Eye abstemious you grew up;
Nor did the dancing Ruby, sparkling, out-pour'd,
Allure you from the cool crystalline Stream.

Samson. Where'er the liquid Brook or Fountain flow'd
I drank, nor envy'd Man the chearing Grape;
But what avail'd this Temp'rance not compleat,
Against another Object more enticing?
I laid my Strength in Lust's lascivious Lap.

Manoa. Trust yet in God; the Father's timely Care
Shall prosecute the means to free thee hence;
Mean time, all healing Words from these thy Friends admit.

A I R.

Manoa. *Just are the Ways of God to Man,
Let none his secret Actions scan;
For all is best, tho' oft we doubt
Of what his Wisdom brings about:
Still his unsearchable Dispose
Blesses the Righteous in the close.*

Samson. My Evils hopeless are; one Pray'r remains,
A speedy Death, to close my Miseries.

Micah.

Micah. Relieve thy Champion, Image of thy Strength;
And turn his Labours to a peaceful End.

A I R.

Micah. Return, O God of Hosts! behold
Thy Servant in Distress,
His mighty Grievs redress,
Nor by the Heathen be they told.

C H O R U S.

To Dust his Glory they wou'd tread,
And number him amongst the Dead.

S C E N E II.

SAMSON, MICAH, DALILA, Chorus of Israelites,
and Virgins attending DALILA.

Micah. But who is this, that so bedeck'd and gay,
Comes this way sailing like a stately Ship,
With all her Streamers waving in the Winds;
An odorous Perfume her Harbinger,
A Damsel Train behind? 'Tis *Dalila*, thy Wife.

Samson. My Wife! my Trait'ers: Let her not come
near me.

Micah. She stands, and eyes thee fix'd, with Head declin'd,
(Like a fair Flow'r surcharg'd with Dew) she weeps;
Her Words address'd to thee seem Tears dissolv'd,
Wetting the Borders of her silken Vail.

Dalila. With doubtful Feet, and wav'ring Resolution,
I come, O *Samson*! dreading thy Displeasure;
But Conjugal Affection led me on
Prevailing over Fear and tim'rous Doubt;
Glad, if in ought, my Help or Love cou'd serve
To expiate my rash, unthought Misdeed.

Samson. Out, thou *Hyena*! 'twas Malice brought thee here;
These are the Arts of Women false, like thee,
To break all Vows, repent, deceive, submit;
Then, with instructed Skill, again transgress:
The wisest Men have met such bosom Snakes,
Beguill'd like me, to Ages an Example.

Dalila. I wou'd not lessen my Offence, yet beg
To weigh it by itself; what is it then?
But Curiosity, a small Female Fault,
Greedy of Secrets, but to publish them.
Why wou'd you trust a Woman's Frailty then?
And to her Importunity your Strength?
A mutual Weakness mutual Pardon claims.

Samson. How cunningly the Sorceress displays
Her own Transgressions, to upbraid me mine?
I to myself was false, ere thou to me;
Bitter Reproach! but true. The Pardon then
I to my Folly give, take thou to thine.

A I R.

With plaintive Notes and am'rous Moan
Thus coos the Turtle left alone;
Like her, averse to each Delight,
She wears the tedious widow'd Night:
But when her absent Mate returns,
With doubled Raptures then she burns.

Dalila. Alas! th' Event was worse than I foresaw:
Fearless at home of Partners in my Love,
'Twas Jealousy did prompt to keep you there
Both Day and Night, Love's Pris'ner, wholly mine.

Samson. Did Love constrain thee? No, 'twas raging Lust.
Love seeks for Love, thy Treason sought my Hate.
In vain you strive to cover Shame with Shame:

Once

Once join'd to me, tho' judg'd your Country's Foe,
Parents, and all, were in the Husband lost.

A I R.

*Your Charms to Ruin led the way,
My Sense deprav'd,
My Strength enslav'd,
As I did love, you did betray.
How great the Curse! How hard my Fate
To pass Life's Sea with such a Mate!*

Dalila. Forgive what's done, nor think of what's past Cure;
From forth this Prison-House come home to me,
Where with redoubled Love, and nursing Care,
(To me glad Office!) my Virgins and myself
Shall tend about thee to extremest Age.

A I R.

Dalila. *My Faith and Truth, O Samson, prove;
But hear me, hear the Voice of Love;
With Love no Mortal can be cloy'd,
All Happiness is Love enjoy'd.*

Chorus of Virgins.

*Her Faith and Truth, O Samson, prove,
But hear her, hear the Voice of Love.*

A I R.

Dalila, *To fleeting Pleasures make your Court,
No Moment lose, for Life is short;
The present Now's our only Time,
The missing That our only Crime.*

How

*How charming is domestick Ease!
A thousand ways I'll strive to please:
Life is not lost, tho' lost your Sight,
Let other Sense: taste Delight.*

Chorus repeated.

*Her Faith and Truth, O Samson, prove,
But hear her, hear the Voice of Love.*

Samson. Ne'er think of that; I know thy warbling Charms,
Thy Trains, thy Wiles, and fair enchanted Cup;
Their Force is null'd; where once I have been caught,
I shun the Snare; these Chains, this Prison-House
I count the House of Liberty to thine.

Dalila. Let me approach at least, and touch thy Hand.

Samson. Not for thy Life, lest fierce Rememb'rance wake
My sudden Rage, to tear thee Limb from Limb:
At Distance I forgive; depart with that:
Now triumph in thy Falshood; so farewell.

Dalila. Thou art more deaf to Pray'rs than Winds or Seas.
Thy Anger rages an eternal Tempest;
Why should I humbly sue for Peace, thus scorn'd,
With Infamy upon my Name denounc'd?
When in this Land I ever shall be held
The first of Women-kind, Living or Dead.
My Praises shall be sung at solemn Feasts,
Who sav'd my Country from a fierce Destroyer.

D U E T.

Dalila. *Traitor to Love, I'll sue no more
For Pardon scorn'd, your Threats give o'er.*
Samson. *Traitress to Love, I'll bear no more
The Charmer's Vice, your Arts give o'er.*

SCENE

S C E N E III.

SAMSON, MICAH, and the Chorus of Israelites.

Micah. She's gone, a Serpent manifest, her Sting
Discover'd in the end.

Samson. So let her go;
God sent her here to aggravate my Folly.

A I R.

*It is not Virtue, Valour, Wit,
Or Comeliness of Grace,
That Woman's Love can truly hit,
Or in her Heart claim Place.*

*Still wav'ring where their Choice to fix,
Too oft they choose the Wrong;
So much Self-love does rule the Sex,
They nothing else love long.*

Samson. Favour'd of Heav'n is he who finds one true;
How rarely found! --- his way to Peace is smooth.

C H O R U S.

*To Man God's universal Law
Gave Pow'r to keep the Wife in Awe;
Thus shall his Life be ne'er dismay'd,
By Female Usurpation sway'd.*

S C E N E IV.

SAMSON, MICAH, HARAPHA, Chorus of Israelites,
and Priests of Dagon.

Micah. No Words of Peace, no Voice-enchanting Fear,
A rougher Tongue expect. --- Here's Harapha,

I know

I know him by his Stride, and haughty look.

Harapha. I come not, *Samson*, to condole thy Chance;
I am of *Gath*, Men call me *Harapha*;
Thou know'st me now; of thy prodigious Might
Much have I heard, incredible to me!
Nor less displeas'd, that never in the Field
We met, to try each other's Deeds of Strength:
I'd see if thy Appearance answers loud Report.

Samson. The Way to know, were not to see, but taste.

Harapha. Ha! dost thou then already single me?
I thought that Labour, and thy Chains, had tam'd thee.
Had Fortune brought me to that Field of Death,
Where thou wrought'st Wonders with an Ass's Jaw,
I'd left thy Carcase where the Ass lay thrown.

Samson. Boast not of what thou would'st have done,
but do.

Harapha. The Honour certain to have won from thee
I lose, prevented by thy Eyes put out;
To combat with a blind Man, I disdain.

A I R.

Honour and Arms scorn such a Foe,
Tho' I cou'd end thee at a Blow;
Poor Victory,
To conquer thee,
Or glory in thy Overthrow:
Vanquish a Slave that is half slain!
So mean a Triumph I disdain.

Samson. "Who cou'd withstand me, single and unarm'd,
" 'Till a vile Woman, breaking Marriage Vows,
" Did circumvent me?---But now put on your Arms;
" Then take for Spear your weighty Weaver's Beam;
" And come within my Reach, this oaken Staff

" Shall

" Shall raise such Outcries on thy clatter'd Iron,

" Thou oft' shall with thyself at *Gath* again.

Harapha. " Thou durst not thus disparage glorious Arms,

" The Hero's Ornament, had not some Spells

" Of curs'd Magician charm'd thee into Strength,

" Thou feign'st at Birth was giv'n thee in thy Hair.

Samson. " To thy *Philistine* Race I leave th' Enchanters

" Arts ;

" To *Isr'el's* Sons forbid. At my Nativity

" Thro' all my Limbs was heav'nly Strength diffus'd,

" Whilst (as I vow'd) these Locks unshorn I kept.

A I R.

Samson. *My Strength is from the living God,
By Heav'n free-gifted at my Birth,
To quell the Mighty of the Earth,
And prove the brutal Tyrant's Rod :
But to the Righteous Peace and Rest,
With Liberty to all oppress.*

Harapha. " Thy God regards thee not, has giv'n thee up

" A Prey to us, to grind among our Slaves.

Samson. " This I deserve, and more ; yet Pardon hope

" From him whose Ear and Eye are ever open

" To the Suppliant's Cry ; in Confidence whereof

" I here defy thee to the deadly Proof.

Harapha. With thee? a Man condemn'd! a Slave enroll'd!

No worthy Match to stain the Warrior's Sword.

Samson. Can'st thou for this, vain Boaster? yet take heed;

My Heels are fetter'd, but my Hands are free.

Thou Bulk, of Spirit void, I once again,

Blind, and in Chains, provoke thee to the Fight.

D

Harapha.

Harapha. O Dagon! can I hear this Insolence,
To me unus'd, not rend'ring instant Death?

D U E T. *Samson and Harapha.*

Samson. Go, baffled Coward, go,
Lest Vengeance lay thee low;
In Safety fly my Wrath with Speed.

Harapha. Presume not on thy God,
Who under Foot has trod
Thy Strength and Thee, at greatest need.

Both. Go, baffled Coward, go, &c.
Presume not on thy God, &c.

Micah. Here lie the Proof: --- If Dagon be thy God,
With high Devotion invoke his Aid,
His Glory is concern'd. Let him dissolve
Those magick Spells that gave our Hero Strength,
Then know whose God is God; Dagon, of mortal Make,
Or that Great One whom *Abra'm's* Sons adore.

Chorus of *Israelites.*

Hear, Jacob's God! *Jehovah*, hear!
O save us, prostrate at thy Throne,
Isr'el depends on thee alone;
Save us, and shew that thou art near.

Harapha. Dagon, arise! attend thy sacred Feast;
Thy Honour calls, this Day admits no Rest.

Chorus of the Priests of *Dagon.*

To Song and Dance we give the Day
Which shews thy universal Sway.

Protect

*Protect us by thy mighty Hand,
And sweep this Race from out the Land.*

Chorus of both.

Both Chorus's. *Fix'd in his everlasting Seat.*
 Chorus of Israelites. *Jehovah rules the World in State.*
 Chorus Priests of Dagon. *Great Dagon rules the World in State.*
 Both. *His Thunder roars, Heav'n shakes, and Earth's aghast,
 The Stars, with deep Amaze,
 Remain in stedfast Gaze.*
 Chorus of Israelites. *Jehovah is of Gods the first and last.*
 Chorus Priests Dagon. *Great Dagon is of Gods the first and last.*





A C T III. S C E N E I.

SAMSON, MICAH, HARAPHA, and Chorus of Israelites.

MICAH.

MORE Trouble is behind, for *Harapha*
Comes on amain, Speed in his Steps and Look.

Samson. I fear him not, nor all his Giant Brood.

Harapha. *Samson*, to thee our Lords thus bid me say:

This Day to *Dagon* we do sacrifice
With Triumph, Pomp, and Games; we know thy Strength
Surpasses Human Race; come then, and shew
Some publick Proof to grace this solemn Feast.

Samson. I am an *Hebrew*, and our Law forbids
My Presence at their vain religious Rites.

Harapha. "This Answer will not please; rise then, with Speed.

Samson. "Have they not Artists, Wrestlers, Dancers,
" Anticks,

" That I'm pick'd out, a Slave o'er-labour'd thus,

" To make them Sport with blind Activity.

Harapha. This Answer will offend; regard thyself.

Samson. Myself! my Conscience and internal Peace!
Am I so broke with Servitude, to yield
To such absurd Commands? To be their Fool,
And play before their God? --- I will not come.

Harapha. My Message, giv'n with Speed, brooks no Delay.

A I R for *Harapha*.

Presuming Slave! to move their Wrath;

For Mercy sue,

Or Vengeance due

Dooms in one fatal Word thy Death:

Consider,

*Consider, ere it be too late,
To ward th' unerring Shaft of Fate.*

Micah. Reflect then, *Samson*, Matters now are strain'd
Up to the Height, whether to hold or break.
He's gone, whose Malice may inflame the Lords.

Samson. Shall I abuse this consecrated Gift
Of Strength, again returning with my Hair,
By vaunting it in honour to their God,
And prostituting holy things to Idols?

Micah. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my Reach;
'Tis Heav'n alone can save both us and thee.

Chorus of *Israelites.*

*With Thunder arm'd, great God arise;
Help, Lord, or Isr'el's Champion dies:
To thy Protection this thy Servant take,
And save, O save us, for thy Servant's sake.
With Thunder arm'd, great God arise;
Help, Lord, or Isr'el's Champion dies.*

Samson. Be of good Courage, I begin to feel
Some inward Motions, which do bid me go.
" Yet nothing will I do to stain my Vow,
" Or bring our Law Disgrace. Perhaps this Day
" May be remark'd for some great Act, or else
" Be of my Days the last; Heav'n knows th' Event.

Micah. In time thou hast resolv'd, again he comes.

Harapha. *Samson*, this second Summons send our Lords:
Art thou our Captive, Slave, and publick Drudge,
Yet dare dispute thy coming when we send?
Haste thee at once, or we shall Engines find
To move thee, tho' thou wert a solid Rock.

Samson. Vain were their Art if try'd; I yield to go,
Not thro' your Streets be like a wild Beast trail'd.

Harapha.

Harapha. You thus may win the Lords to set you free.

Samson. In nothing I'll comply that's scandalous,
Or sinful by our Law.--- Brethren, farewell;
Your kind Attendance now, I pray, forbear,
Lest it offend to see me girt with Friends.
Expect of me you'll nothing hear impure,
Unworthy God, my Nation, or myself.

Micah. So may'st thou act as serves his Glory best.

Samson. Let but that Spirit (which first rush'd on me
In the Camp of *Dan*) inspire me at my Need,
Then shall I make *Jehovah's* Glory known,
Their Idol Gods shall from his Presence fly,
Scatter'd like Sheep before the God of Hosts.

A I R for *Samson.*

*Thus when the Sun from's wat'ry Bed,
All curtain'd with a cloudy Red,
Pillows his Chin upon an orient Wave;
The wand'ring Shadows ghastly pale
All troop to their infernal Fail,
Each fetter'd Ghost slips to his sev'ral Grave.*

Micah. With Might endu'd above the Sons of Men,
Swift as the Lightning's Glance his Errand execute,
And spread his Name amongst the Heathen round.

A I R for *Micah.*

*The Holy One of Is'el be thy Guide,
The Angel of thy Birth stand by thy Side;
To Fame immortal go,
Heav'n bids thee strike the Blow:
The Holy One of Is'el is thy Guide.*

Chorus

Chorus of Israelites.

To Fame immortal go,
 Heav'n bids thee strike the Blow:
 The Holy One of Isr'el is thy Guide.

S C E N E II.

MICAH, MANOA, and Chorus of Israelites.

Micah. Old *Manoa*, with youthful Steps, makes haste
 To find his Son, or bring us some glad News.

Manoa. I come, my Brethren, not to seek my Son,
 Who at the Feast does play before the Lords;
 But give you Part with me, what Hopes I have
 To work his Liberty.

Micah. " Say, Reverend Sire,
 " 'Twill much rejoice us to partake that Hope.

Manoa. " I have attempted, one by one, the Lords;
 " Some I found harsh, set on Revenge in Spite;
 " Others more moderate, their Aim Reward;
 " The most confess'd they were enough reveng'd,
 " If some convenient Ransom was propos'd.

A I R and Chorus of Philistines at a Distance.

Great Dagon has subdu'd our Foe,
 And brought their boasted Hero low:
 Sound out his Pow'r in Notes divine,
 Praise him with Mirth, high Chear, and Wine.

Manoa. What Joy of Noise was that? it tore the Sky.

Micah. They shout and sing to see their dreaded Foe
 Now captive, blind, delighting with his Strength.

Manoa. Cou'd my Inheritance but ransom him
 Without my Patrimony, having him,
 The richest of my Tribe.

Micah.

Micah. Sons care to nurse
Their Parents in Old Age; but you, your Son.

Manoa. " My daily Task shall be to guide his Steps,
" And think of those high Deeds by him achiev'd;
" Combing those Locks which down his Shoulders wave,
" At once our Nation's Strength and Ornament.

A I R for Manoa.

*How willing my Paternal Love
The Weight to share
Of Filial Care,*

*And part of Sorrow's Burden prove:
Tho' wand'ring in the Shades of Night,
Whilst I have Eyes he wants no Light.*

Micah. Your Hopes of his Deliv'ry seem not vain,
In which all Isr'el's Friends participate.

Manoa. I know your friendly Minds, and ---

[A Symphony here of Horror and Confusion.]

Heav'n! what Noise?
Horribly loud, unlike the former Shout.

Chorus of *Philistines* at a Distance.

*Hear us, our God! O bear our Cry!
Death! Ruin! fall'n! no Help is nigh:
O Mercy, Heav'n! we sink! we die!*

Micah. Noise call you this? an universal Groan,
As if the World's Inhabitation perish'd!
Blood, Death, and Ruin at their utmost Point!

Manoa. Ruin indeed! Oh! they have slain my Son!

Micah. Thy Son is rather slaying them; that Cry
From Slaughter of one Foe cou'd not ascend.

Manoa. " What shall we do? stay here, or run and see?

Micah.

Micah. "Keep here, lest into Danger's Mouth we run.
 "This gen'ral Cry speaks all *Philistia* fall'n.
 "What if his Eye-sight now by Heav'n restor'd,
 "Enables him to Vengeance on his Foes?
Manoa. "That were a Joy presumptuous to be thought.
Micah. "Things as incredible our God has wrought
 "Of old; what hinders now?" --- But see, my Friends,
 One hither speeds, an *Hebrew* of our Tribe.

S C E N E III.

MANOA, MICAH, and an Israelite Officer. *Chorus*
 of Israelites.

Officer. Where shall I run, or which way fly the Thoughts
 Of this most horrid Sight? O Countrymen!
 You're in this sad Event too much concern'd.

Micah. The Accident was loud, we long to know from
 whence.

Officer. Let me recover Breath; it will burst forth.

Manoa. Tell us the Sum, the Circumstance defer.

Officer. *Gaza* yet stands, but all her Sons are fall'n.

Manoa. Sad! not to us: But now relate by whom.

Officer. By *Samson* done.

Manoa. The Sorrow lessens still,
 And nigh converts to Joy.

Officer. Oh *Manoa*!
 In vain I wou'd refrain; --- the evil Tale
 Too soon will rudely pierce thy aged Ear.

Manoa. Suspence in News is Torture; speak them out.

Officer. Then take the worst in brief --- *Samson* is dead.

Manoa. The worst indeed! My Hopes to free him hence
 Are blasted all; but Death, who sets all free,
 Hath paid his Ransom now. "What windy Joys
 "Had I this Day conceiv'd? abortive all!"

E

" Like

" Like the fair first-born Bloom of early Spring,

" Nipt with the lagging Rear of Winter's Frost.

Micah. Yet, ere we give the Reins to Grief, say first
How dy'd he? Death to Life is Crown or Shame.

Officer. Unwounded of his Enemies he fell,
At once he did destroy, and was destroy'd.

The Edifice, where all were met to see,

Upon their Heads, and on his own he pull'd.

Manoa. O lastly over-strong against thyself!

A dreadful Way thou took'st to thy Revenge:

Glorious, yet dearly bought!

Micah. " In Life and Death

" Thou hast fulfill'd the Work for which foretold:

" And now thou ly'st victorious, tho' self-kill'd,

" Triumphant o'er a Heap of slaughter'd Foes,

" More than thy Life had slain. Let Isr'el now

" The Voice of Lamentation raise, and sing

" A Hymn of Sorrow to this honour'd Soul.

A I-R for Micah.

Ye Sons of Isr'el now lament,

Your Spear is broke, your Bow's unbent;

Your Glory's fled,

Amongst the Dead

Great Samson lies,

For ever, ever, clos'd his Eyes.

Chorus of Israelites.

Weep, Isr'el, weep a louder Strain,

Samson, your Strength, your Hero's slain.

Manoa. Proceed we hence to find his Body soiled

In vile *Philistine* Blood, with the pure Stream

And cleansing Herbs wash off the clotted Gore;

Then

Then solemnly attend him to my Tomb,
With silent Obsequies and fun'ral Train.

Micah. The Body comes; we'll meet it on the way
With Laurels ever green, and branching Palm;
Then lay it in its Monument, hung round
With all his Trophies, and great Acts enroll'd
In Verse Heroick, or sweet Lyrick Song.

Manoa. There shall all *Isr'el's* valiant Youth resort,
And from his Memory inflame their Breasts
To matchless Valour, whilst they sing his Praise.

A I R for Manoa.

*Glorious Hero, may thy Grave
Peace and Honour ever have;
After all thy Pains and Woes,
Rest eternal, sweet Repose.*

Israelite Woman. The Virgins too shall on their feastful Days
Visit his Tomb with Flow'rs, and there bewail
His Loss unfortunate in Nuptial Choice.

Chorus of Virgins.

*Bring the Laurels, bring the Bays,
Strew his Hearse, and strew the Ways.*

A I R.

*May ev'ry Hero fall like thee,
Thro' Sorrow to Felicity.*

Chorus repeated.

*Bring the Laurels, bring the Bays,
Strew his Herse, and strew the Ways.*

Manoa.

Manoa. Come, come; no Time for Lamentation now;
No Cause for Grief; *Samson* like *Samson* fell;
Both Life and Death heroick. To his Foes
Ruin is left; to Him eternal Fame.

Micah. Why should we weep or wail, dispraise or blame,
Where all is well and fair to quiet us?
Praise we *Jehovah* then, who to the End
Not parted from him, but assisted still,
'Till Desolation fill'd *Philistia's* Lands,
Honour and Freedom giv'n to *Jacob's* Seed.

GRAND CHORUS.

*Let the bright Seraphims in burning Row,
Their loud, up-lifted Angel-Trumpets blow:
Let the Cherubick Host, in tuneful Choirs,
Touch their immortal Harps with golden Wires:
Let their celestial Concerts all unite,
Ever to sound his Praise in endless Blaze of Light.*

F I N I S.

